

Kenji YAMAMOTO
Application No.: 08/817,076

W.C.
wherein, in the event that a terrain object is located intervening the operator-controlled object in the three-dimensional virtual space when viewed from the viewpoint, a portion of the terrain object overlapping with the operator-controlled object is rendered with a show-through image effect.--

REMARKS

In the Final Office Action of September 28, 1999, the Examiner maintained the rejection of claims 2, 4, and 6-9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,491,510 to Gove ("Gove"); rejected claims 10-13, 15, 17, and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gove; and objected to claims 3, 5, 14, and 16 as being dependent upon rejected base claims.

During an interview conducted with Examiner Thu Nguyen on March 21, 2000, Applicants discussed the claimed invention with the Examiner with specific attention directed to the differences between Gove and the claimed invention. As explained in the Interview Summary issued by Examiner Nguyen on March 24, 2000, Applicants explained that the term "physical object" as used in the claims does not relate to a "real object" as disclosed by Gove (e.g., a patient's hand). Applicants proposed at that time amending the claims to recite a "virtual object" rather than "physical object" in order to clarify the intended scope of the claims. The Examiner agreed that such a change would distinguish the Gove reference.

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Applicants have cancelled claims 10-12, amended claims 2-9 and 13-18, and added new claims 19-29 in order to clarify the recitation of Applicant's invention.

Applicants respectfully assert that the amendments to the claims are not directed to overcoming the prior art Gove reference as cited by the Examiner, but instead are specifically directed toward clarify the language used to claim the disclosed invention.

Regarding the pending rejections based on Gove, as discussed in the interview of March 21, 2000, and as accepted by the Examiner in the interview summary, Gove fails to teach or suggest Applicants' claimed invention. Applicants assert, therefore, that claims 2-9 and 13-29 are now in proper form for allowance.

Applicants have also amended the specification to correct for errors in language usage and grammar. The amendments to the specification are not new matter and constitute merely changes to improve the readability and understandability of the disclosure.

With respect to the amendments to the claims and the newly submitted claims, Applicants assert that the claims are fully supported by the application as originally filed, and that no new matter has been added. The following are examples of amended language and support in the specification for that language:

viewpoint - is supported, for example, by the disclosed "visual point . . . from which the virtual image is viewed" (page 8, lines 24-25).

objects - is supported, for example, by the disclosed "enemy robots, bomb explosion images, and elements of virtual terrain such as obstacles, background and topographical features" (page 10, lines 2-4).

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three-dimensional virtual space - is supported, for example, by the disclosure of "[t]he game device pertaining to this embodiment of the present invention has a storyline in which objects (robots) . . . battle each other in three-dimensional space. The player controls his or her own robot, moving it freely through virtual space . . ." (page 8, lines 21-24).

operator-controlled object - is supported, for example, by the disclosure that "[t]he player controls his or her own robot, moving it freely through virtual space . . ." (page 8, lines 23-24).

rendering a portion of the terrain object overlapping with the operator controlled object with a show-through image effect - is supported, for example, by the disclosure that "[a]s shown in Fig. 10 . . . where the visual field angle from visual point C' is θ -1, the area of an object R' having extension in the y direction overlapped by the obstacles O falls within the range θ -2. Thus, the show-through processing may be performed on selected areas in the θ -2 portion only."

In view of the foregoing amendments, Applicant respectfully requests examination of this application and allowance of the pending claims.

If there is any fee due in connection with the filing of this Preliminary Amendment, please charge the fee to our Deposit Account No. 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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